# A VIEW

OF THE

CONTESTED POINTS

IN

# THE NEGOTIATION

BETWEEN

ADMINISTRATION

AND THE

DIRECTORS

OF THE

EAST INDIA COMPANY,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE RENEWAL OF

The Company's Charter;

AS THEY STOOD ON THE NINTH OF APRIL, 1793.

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# A VIEW OF THE CONTESTED POINTS, &c. &c.

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THERE never was a crisis in the state and affairs of the East India Company more momentous than the present. The question they have now depending is, whether they shall continue to be lords over rich kingdoms, paying large revenues, maintaining numerous armies, yielding the most valuable articles of commerce; whether they shall continue to enjoy a regulated monopoly of the immense trade carried on between Great Britain and the East, and thus the finest commercial fleet the world ever saw, also continue to be maintained; whether the debts of the Company shall be put into a happy train of liquidation, and the dividend of the Proprietors



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be, in the mean time, raiſed to ten *per cent.*, with the brilliant and rational proſpect of an annual addition to their capital beſides, and that after paying half a million yearly towards the public expence; whether the intereſts of the Company and the nation ſhall be thus cemented, and mutually conſolidated: In a word, whether the Company ſhall continue to hold a ſituation far more ſplendid in reſpect to territorial dominion, commercial grandeur, vaſt revenues, and extenſive patronage, than ſubjects of any other ſtate, ancient or modern, ever enjoyed; and, indeed, ſuch as few ſovereign ſtates could command; or whether, diveſted of territory and of excluſive privileges, reduced to raiſe a trading capital from the ſtockholders, expoſed to innumerable rivals and diſturbances in every ſeat of their commerce: Incapable, in ſhort, as they would thus ſoon find themſelves of carrying on trade—whether their affairs ſhall be brought to a ſtand, and the proprietors, inſtead of continuing to receive even the former dividend of eight *per cent.*, which was a profit, ſhall have to draw forth, by degrees, dividends upon the capital, as the aſſets

of the Company, depreciated by its decline, can be realized?

This is, in effect, now the queſtion. Whatever may be ſaid, and ſaid even from moſt reſpectable authority, we heſitate not to declare our firm conviction, that, in the poſſeſſion of an excluſive charter, are involved all thoſe eſſential intereſts, and even the exiſtence of the Company as an active body.

It has been ſuggeſted, that, without the aid of an excluſive commerce, the territorial revenues would yield a ſurplus ſufficient for the participation propoſed between Government and the Company: But what would the Company's ſhare of that participation be, in compariſon of the advantages they now derive from the revenue? And ſince the State lays claim to the territory, and is itſelf to decide upon the claim, ſince the eſtabliſhment of an open trade between India and Great Britain would afford a variety of new channels for the remittance of the tribute accruing to the

latter

latter country, how long may we ſuppoſe the Government would think fit to continue to the Company a ſhare of that income, in the reception of which its agency ceaſes to be thought neceſſary? Again, it has been alleged, that, with the great capital, the numerous eſtabliſhments, and the long experience which the Company poſſeſs, they muſt be ſuperior in every market to all the private traders who can enter into competition with them: But, beſides that their capital would be extremely reduced, if they received merely an annuity from the territorial revenue, the queſtion is not, whether the Eaſt India Company would be ſuperior to their rivals, and might be able, by the weight of capital, to cruſh them; but, whether a trade ſo carried on would be beneficial to either party? We venture to affirm, that it would not; we venture to affirm that, if perſevered in, it would end in the depreſſion, if not the extinction, of all preſent contending intereſts, and of the greater part of the home revenue derived by the Government from the Eaſt India trade.

trade. After this, a new order of things might indeed arife. When the field fhould be cleared of all the firft powerful competitors, a more quiet fcene might remain for the humbler adventurers who fhould afterwards enter upon it. Trade would indeed be free, but the markets fpoiled. What changes alfo might have taken place in the country it would not be eafy to fay; but, as the refult of all, we are not afraid of avowing it to be our opinion, that neither would this nation derive fo much profit, nor the ftate fo much commercial revenue, from the India trade as it does at prefent. Be this point, however, decided as it may, it is entirely probable that, before a decifion was formed upon it, the Eaft India Company, left with only their corporate capacity, would ceafe to carry on active commerce; they would then only have to wind up their affairs, to pay off their debts, and, from fubjects moveable and immoveable, to fatisfy the proprietors for their fhares of the capital ftock. To what difficulties, difputes, delays, loffes, they would thence be expofed, it cannot be neceffary to ftate; the cafe of an individual merchant, who feels himfelf obliged to

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come to a ſtand, is a familiar, but by no means an adequate illuſtration of what their condition would be. The proprietors will conſider what in this caſe the value of their ſtock would be, and whether, notwithſtanding the actual property of the Company is held to warrant the preſent market price of that ſtock, if dividends even of eight *per cent.* ceaſed to be paid, and if the capital were only to be realized from the converſion of merchandiſe and of dead ſubjects into money, that ſtock could be diſpoſed of even at par.

This unhappily is not the propoſal of a diſtant viſionary caſe. The thing is come near to us. A few weeks ago we had a proſpect at once the moſt ſhining and the moſt real, of long and increaſing proſperity; the hopes of thoſe who were the moſt ſanguine, the wiſhes of thoſe who were the moſt attached to the Company, were exceeded by it. It was a proſpect which ſeemed to give the nation at large content. But now a dark cloud has covered all; we ſee not that we ſhall have an excluſive charter at all; much leſs that we ſhall have an increaſe of dividend, or a long participation

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of revenue, or the continuance of commercial profit, or an aſſurance of any of thoſe things which, united, raiſed the Company to ſo high a point of view, and their ſtock juſtly to ſuch pre-eminent value. What is the cauſe of all this? Can we not reſtore the flattering proſpect which was ſet before us? How ſhall the differences which have ariſen be accommodated? A fair inquiry into theſe points is the ſubject of the preſent Tract. It is not, we conceive, enough for the India Company to ſay, that the national intereſts are ſo deeply concerned in the ſyſtem which their Directors lay down, as that it is the part of Adminiſtration to accede to that ſyſtem.— If this were indeed ſo (and certainly, though we cannot fully aſſent to that propoſition, we are of the number of thoſe who think that the intereſts both of the State and of the Company will be better conſulted in their union, than in their diſjunction), yet this is not the proper ground for them to reſt their cauſe upon *, and they go upon argu-

* No doubt there are very cogent arguments of a public nature for an accommodation between Government and the Com-

arguments extraneous to the conſtituent body as a Company. They argue upon the ſuppoſed neceſſities of the other party, rather than upon the intrinſic right of their pretenſions *.

Neither can we ſo far forget the ſituation of the Eaſt India Company as to regard the negotiation between them and Government, as a negotiation between two independent powers. Both indeed have important intereſts depending, but the Company has its exiſtence. The one has the power of conceſſion; the part of the other, is, by

Company; nor have we any reaſon to fear that Adminiſtration will not ſee and reſpect theſe arguments; but the Directors, in taking this ground, ſeem rather to occupy the place which his Majeſty's miniſters muſt think of right to belong to them.

* Let it not, however, be underſtood, in what is ſaid here, or elſewhere, that we mean to diſparage the ability, the integrity and honour which are to be found in the Court of Directors. We know that it poſſeſſes men eminent for thoſe qualities; and in treating of public ſubjects with the freedom neceſſary for the communication of opinion, we would wiſh to ſtand remote from the imputation of being influenced by perſonal illiberality.

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wiſdom, argument, temper, deference, concilia-tion, to aim at obtaining all that is really eſſential to the Company in a new agreement; and if their juſt endeavours to this end finally fail, the nation will then ſee and judge. In the ſad reverſe which has taken place in the aſpect of this negotiation, we ſearch in vain for adequate cauſes. We nei-ther diſcover the real differences which ſhould hinder the progreſs of negotiation, nor trace the firſt occaſion of miſunderſtanding and alienation. Whatever theſe may have been, it is not our pre-ſent intention to aggravate them, but rather, by a review of the negotiation, to appreciate the points in diſpute, and to propoſe the means of accommodation.

In order to form a proper idea of the juſtice or injuſtice of the preſent claims made by the Court of Directors, in contradiſtinction to the rights con-tended for by Adminiſtration, in behalf of the far greater general intereſts of the empire, it will be neceſſary to take a ſhort retroſpect, and alſo to compare the offers held out now by Adminiſtra-tion, with the expectations of the reaſonable part

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of the proprietors two years ago. We muſt likewiſe compare the claims advanced by the great manufacturing interests of Great Britain and Ireland, with the terms now propoſed by Adminiſtration for their relief, and view at the ſame time, with a liberal eye, what is due to our ſubjects in the Eaſt. For ſeveral years after the commencement of the preſent adminiſtration, it ſeems to have been annually inſiſted upon in Parliament by oppoſition, when Mr. Dundas, the miniſter for India, brought forward his budget, that the Company were involved in debt, which every day increaſed; thus of courſe haſtening on their ruin.

On the other hand, the miniſter for India, and his friends, argued that they were in a convaleſcent ſtate, and, under the preſent management, would make a rapid progreſs to proſperity. The price of their ſtock, which in peace is the beſt criterion of public opinion, roſe from being ſo low as 118 *per cent.* in 1784, to 190 *per cent.* in 1791, where it ſeemed to have found its level.

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This certainty, when compared with the national funds, proved, that the general expectation did not reach 4 *per cent.* as a permanent intereſt on the money inveſted in the Company's ſtock.—In 1791 Mr. Dundas, after opening the India budget, declared it as his opinion, that our affairs in the Eaſt were now in ſuch a progreſſive ſtate of proſperity as warranted him to ſay, " That Britain would ſooner benefit by a participation of the Indian revenue, than India would benefit by ſupport from the revenue of Britain; and that the day was not in his mind far diſtant, when the ſtate might thus participate." This ſtruck the Houſe with agreeable ſurpriſe, but by many it was ſuppoſed to be impoſſible. The great manufacturing intereſts of the kingdom have uniformly exclaimed againſt the Company's monopoly.—They have complained that their induſtry has been cramped by the Company's not extending ſufficiently the exports, nor allowing others to do ſo. They have preſſed the adminiſtration on a variety of points, according to their reſpective intereſts; but the great majority of them ſeemed to

agree in this, " That there ſhould be a free export and import trade, between the merchants of this country on the one part, and China and India on the other, in ſhips of their own, independent of the Company's control; and that they ſhould have leave to ſend their own agents to thoſe countries, and to employ whom they pleaſed."

Some of the great manufacturing towns petitioned Adminiſtration to extend our exports to India by all poſſible means, and to prevent the exports of India from coming here by all poſſible means alſo.

The illiberality and abſurdity marking ſome of theſe petitions certainly was great; but there was alſo ſo much good ſenſe in others of them, and arguments in favour of the ſtate ſo unanſwerable, that it thus became a very difficult taſk to ſupport the Company in their excluſive trade, and at the ſame time to do juſtice to ſo many contending intereſts.

Although Adminiſtration ſeemed much attached to the Company, and ſupported them in the defence they made of themſelves, by ſhewing that their exports had been increaſed from 400,000l. in 1784, to 1,000,000l. in 1792, and were increaſing annually, as alſo that the whole of their management was much improved; yet they could not entirely exculpate them. The miniſters ſaw, with much regret, *that this country had not its natural ſhare of the commerce with India, and an irreſiſtible proof of this appeared in the growing clandeſtine trade which was carried on by Engliſh property under foreign flags.*

This trade ſeemed to have commenced about the year 1777, and in 1791 it is ſtated to have abſolutely occupied 10,255 tons of foreign ſhipping (as appears in the Memorial in the printed papers, No. 4.), navigated principally by Engliſhmen, the returns on which from India clearly exceeded the returns of the Company, ſo that the benefit of the larger part of the Indian commerce was loſt to the nation, and this of courſe owing

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to ſome radical defect in the management of the Company. It then became a favourite object with Adminiſtration to bring the whole of this commerce to London.

The proprietors of India ſtock ſaw ſo many difficulties ſtarted by the mercantile intereſts of the kingdom to the excluſive trade, as added to the diſpoſition which they conceived Parliament ever had to veſt the territory in the ſtate, that all they looked for was a ſecurity for their dividend of eight *per cent.*

The miniſter for India had never given an opinion on this conſequential point; but as he had declared in the Houſe of Commons, "That wherever the revenues went, the debt muſt follow them," the moſt prevailing idea was, that the revenue would be taken from the Company.

Matters ſtood in this ſort of ſuſpenſe, when Mr. Dundas, early in January, made a communication to the Houſe of Commons, to the following purport:

"That

" That he conceived the affairs of India were now in ſuch a flouriſhing ſtate, that the nation might participate in the revenue.

" That as the Company had run riſks, and contributed ſo much to the proſperity of our Indian affairs, he conceived their preſent dividend ſhould not only be ſecured to them, but alſo an additional intereſt allowed to them on their ſtock.

" That the preſent revenue ſyſtem ſeemed to anſwer very well; and as he preferred the favourable reſult of experience to new theories, that he ſhould propoſe the territory to continue under the management of the Company."

This of courſe altered the face of matters much, and gave the proprietors new and great expectations. A negotiation was commenced between the Adminiſtration and the Court of Directors, which appears in the papers numbered 1 to 5, printed by the Court of Directors for the uſe of the proprietors. It began with Mr. Dundas's letter to

the Chairman, of 14th of January laſt, indicating his readineſs to have the moſt full and candid diſcuſſion with the Court on all points relative to the renewal of their charter.

On the 17th January, the Court ſupplied Mr. Dundas with the paper inſerted in No. 1. ſtyled, "Hints for the Purpoſe of forming an Agreement for the Renewal of the Company's excluſive Trade."

Mr. Dundas's anſwer to theſe hints appears in the printed paper, No. 1. dated the 16th February. He there gives his unreſerved opinion ſo far as he had then made up his mind, but of courſe ſubject to ſuch alterations as might ariſe from the different Memorials and intelligence which were naturally to be looked for in the courſe of ſuch a negotiation.

In the commencement of that ſtatement he provides for this, by ſaying, " As I mean, in the obſervations I am now to offer, to ſubmit my general ideas on the ſubject without concert (it not yet being matured

tured for ſuch concert) with the reſt of his Majeſty's confidential ſervants; *I muſt reſerve the privilege of reconſidering any of the points on which I may have occaſion to give an opinion, if upon farther reflection I ſhall ſee cauſe to alter it in any reſpect.*" He afterwards enters at once ſo largely into the ſubject, and takes ſuch comprehenſive views, embracing ſo many different important intereſts, that this letter has been ſtyled, and with apparent propriety, the baſis of the whole negotiation. All the real and eſſential points in which the proprietors had an intereſt, appear in this letter to be conceded to them, and on a ſcale liberal beyond any expectations they had framed. After providing for the intereſts of their debts, and 500,000l. *per annum* in liquidation of the principal, Mr. Dundas propoſes in their favour as follows:

Firſt, To increaſe the capital ſtock one million; and to allow a dividend of ten *per cent.*; which was certainly two *per cent.* more than they expected, and this upon the whole ſtock, old and new.

Secondly, That government ſhould not participate until the above was firſt paid, and then only to the extent of 500,000l. *per annum*; after which the ſurplus to be appropriated in ſuch manner as to operate as a guarantee for the capital ſtock of the Company.

Thirdly, The government of India, with the conduct and management of the territorial revenues, to reſt with the Company, as at preſent.

Fourthly, Mr. Dundas had previouſly given it as his decided opinion, that the trade with China ſhould reſt as at preſent, with the Company, entirely excluſive.

Fifthly, He alſo agreed to continue to them the trade with India, under an excluſive charter, provided ſuch regulations were introduced as would leave the nation no reaſon to complain that the exports and imports were cramped.

In ſhort, the only terms that Mr. Dundas ſeems to require in this letter, in return for ſuch

liberal conceſſions, appear in his own words as follows:

"The ſecond head is a conſideration of great importance, and upon which there is undoubtedly great difference of opinion, but meaning frankly to throw out the opinion I at preſent entertain, I am free to ſay, that, under all circumſtances, the advantages of continuing the trade under an excluſive charter do, in my judgment, greatly outweigh the force of any objections which have reached me on the ſubject of the Indian monopoly; and I am ſanguine enough in my opinion to believe that, when the ſubject is canvaſſed to the bottom, the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain and Ireland, who are ſuppoſed to be the moſt intereſted in the deciſion of this queſtion, will concur with me in that opinion.— But in delivering this opinion, I deſire to be underſtood as ſpeaking of a *regulated monopoly*, by which expreſſion I mean, that the monopoly muſt be ſo regulated at to enſure to the merchants and manufacturers the certain and ample means of exporting to India, to the full extent of the de-

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mand of that country for the manufactures of this; and likewise a certainty, that, in so far as the produce of India affords raw materials for the manufacturers of Great Britain or Ireland, that produce shall be brought home, at a rate as reasonable as the circumstances of the two countries will admit of.

" In stating this observation, I am not bringing forward any jealousy that I personally entertain on the subject; for the knowledge I have derived of your affairs, by the experience I have had in the government of India, has enabled me to witness the great exertions and improvements you have made in the conduct of your commerce, with a view to the very objects in question: *But the fact is notorious, that a clandestine trade, to a considerable extent, is certainly carried on between Europe and India, on a capital provided by British subjects, both in Britain and India*; and so long as that trade continues, the public will not be satisfied that every thing has been done by the East India Company that can be done, and of course will not be satisfied with the continuance of a monopoly,

unlefs they are experimentally convinced, by fome mode or other, that the two objects, both export and import, to which I have referred, are fecured by arrangements fufficiently adequate to the purpofe.

"I certainly will not take upon me finally to form an opinion on the fubject, without a full conference with you, and the Committee of the Court of Directors; but my prefent fentiment is, that the effential objects to which I have referred, can only be accomplifhed by the Eaft India Company's *affording an additional tonnage adequate to the exports from Britain and Ireland, and to the imports from India;* and this muft be done at a rate of freight fo reafonable as to fatisfy the merchants and manufacturers of this country, that the effect of the monopoly of the Eaft India Company is not calculated to bring an unneceffary, and of courfe an unjuft, burden on the manufacturing intereft of Great Britain and Ireland. And I have the lefs difficulty in holding out this idea, becaufe it is obvious that, if the trade of the Eaft India Company is conducted on true com-

commercial principles, they can afford to be the carriers both of European and Indian goods cheaper than any individual merchant or trader can on his own private capital.

" In this view of the queſtion, the propoſition ſeems reaſonable on both ſides: For, if the exporter of Britiſh goods, and the importer of Indian raw materials, can accompliſh both objects at an expence more moderate than he himſelf can afford to do it, he can have no reaſon to complain of the Company's monopoly. And on the other hand, if the Eaſt India Company do not contribute their aid to thoſe eſſential objects, by furniſhing freight at a cheaper rate than any individual can do upon his own bottom; it is a proof that the allegation of the Company's trade not being conducted upon the true principles of commercial œconomy, is better founded than I am at preſent diſpoſed to believe it to be. I am aware that there may be difficulties in the execution of this propoſition, even admitting the principle to be a juſt one: But theſe are more pro-

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perly the ſubject of future conference. I am ſatisfied the difficulties are not inſurmountable, and I am ſure it is the duty, and it muſt be the inclination, of the Eaſt India Company to ſmooth, to the utmoſt of their power, every difficulty that may occur in this eſſential part of any future arrangement."

The purport of Mr. Dundas's letter no ſooner went abroad, than the ſtock roſe from 179 to 195; for all thinking men concluded the whole buſineſs was finiſhed, *as every reaſonable expectation of the Company had been anticipated.*

In the Court's anſwer, however, of the 21ſt of February, it will appear that, although they acknowledge the very candid and liberal manner in which Mr. Dundas has given his opinion, they yet are only ready to *receive* all that he propoſes for their benefit, without ſhewing an inclination to concede on their part what he conceives to be abſolutely neceſſary for the purpoſe of transferring the clandeſtine trade, from foreign ſhips and

foreign ports, to the Company's ſhips and the port of London.

They, in the firſt place, refer to their reports, as laid before the Houſe of Commons in this ſeſſion, on the export trade, to prove that the advantages ariſing from continuing the ſtrict monopoly muſt be greater than a well-regulated monopoly. On a reference to theſe reports, it will be found that they ſay " they have exported a ſufficient quantity of goods to ſupply India ;" *on the contrary, we aſſert that they never had ſupplied one ſeventh part of the goods exported to India*, and we refer for the illuſtration of this aſſertion to a document annexed, wherein the exports of the different nations of Europe are accurately ſtated, and with which we have been favoured from unqueſtionable authority. " That the conſumption of European goods, owing to the religion and habits of the natives, could not be materially increaſed ;" *on the contrary, it is notorious to all the world, that it has been, and continues, in a rapid progreſſive ſtate of increaſe.* " That the conſumption

tion of woollens, an article which the Company had ever amply ſupplied, and which had engroſſed their unremitted attention, had fallen off much in India of late years, and was ſtill declining." *On the contrary, it appears that the conſumption of this article had certainly been in a progreſſive ſtate*; and although the Company, from being for many years in the habit of neither ſending the quantities indented for, nor the qualities deſcribed, had forced great part of the trade into other hands, *they ſtill had ſold more in the laſt ten years, ending in* 1790, *than in the ten years ending in* 1780; *as appears by the Company's records.*

Theſe reports are ably drawn up, if meant to ſilence thoſe unacquainted with the ſubject; but otherwiſe, to the informed, there appears ſo very limited a knowledge of the export trade to India, particularly of that carried on by foreigners, clandeſtine traders, captains of the Company's ſhips, and ſo limited a knowledge alſo of the demand in India for European goods, as is really unaccountable. They moreover ſeem to have taken much

pains to prove that they had always loft largely by the export trade.

In fhort, from this latter affertion, and many others equally unfounded, no papers could have been produced fo well calculated as thefe reports are, to prove the bad confequences refulting to the ftate from their exclufive monopoly of the Indian trade, *unlefs properly regulated*, on the principles early fuggefted in Mr. Dundas's letter of the 16th February laft. The Committee of Correfpondence feem to fhew in their anfwer, that they have no intention to make conceffions, as appears from their own language in page 14, No. 1. of the printed papers, *viz.*

" The ideas fuggefted by Mr. Dundas will require a more correct definition and explanation on almoft every point: In their prefent form they go to the full extent of depriving the Company of their exclufive trade; whilft the Company are expected to provide freight for the merchants and manufacturers at a rate cheaper than they can procure it elfewhere.

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" It is ſufficient merely to ſtate theſe facts, in order to ſatisfy Mr. Dundas that the Court of Directors *never can recommend, and that the Proprietors never can accede to, either of theſe propoſitions*, in the general manner in which they are ſtated in Mr. Dundas's letter."

They are of courſe, in their firſt anſwer, almoſt completely at variance with Adminiſtration upon the points which the latter require.

They propoſe to ſupply eight ſhips, for the merchants to ſend out exports, at 10l. per ton, but with the exception of naval and military ſtores.

It will appear afterwards that they did not ſtop here, but changed their ground, and objected likewiſe to copper, then to all metals, to pitch, tar, maſts, &c. &c.

An appearance of accommodation ſeems to have been aimed at in an advertiſement in the newſpapers relative to theſe eight ſhips. Freight

was

was offered at 10l. per ton, after excepting againſt the only articles that could be ſuppoſed worth ſending, and at a period well known to be too late to provide goods.

Now can there be a man, pretending to the leaſt knowledge of exports, who does not know that theſe articles *excepted againſt* were in reality the only material articles of export, and that no cargo could be made up without them? Such an offer made to the merchants, what ſhall we ſay of it? That it ariſes from ignorance; or is it inſult added to injury? We will affirm neither; our wiſh is to heal. But independently of ſuch conſiderations, if the merchants had been allowed to export what articles they choſe, no trade could be carried on in exports to India, unleſs as an aid to the imports from thence; for the connection between the two is this:

On goods from India to Europe, the merchant of India, let it be ſuppoſed, gains twenty-five *per cent.* So if he loſes ten *per cent.* in remitting his

his money back in European exports to India, which, after paying commiſſion, intereſt, and inſurance, amounting to about fourteen *per cent.* is no uncommon caſe, he ſtill gains by the general adventure, fifteen *per cent.* The profits on imports, therefore, form the grand inducement for exports to India, and of courſe as the imports from thence are allowed to increaſe, the trade in exports from Europe will increaſe in a certain relative proportion; and without this we can have no reaſon to expect a rapid increaſe of it. The Committee, in their anſwer, are ſo tenacious of their monopoly, that they refuſe even the liberty to our manufacturers of importing raw materials; but as an accommodation, they propoſe granting bills from India, on Europe, at 2s. the ct. rupee.

The fact is, that bills to a great amount are now annually wanted *on* India, and not *from* it. Beſides this, owing to the diſcount on the Company's bonds abroad, of from eleven to fifteen *per cent.*; a purchaſer of them has had it in his power for ſome years paſt, by exchanging them for

long

long bills at the eſtabliſhed rate of 1s. 11d. *per* ct. rupee, to realiſe here 2s. 1d. to 2s. 2d.; of courſe, even if bills were wanted, the exchange of 2s. would be no inducement.

It is clear then that this could be no accommodation to the merchants or manufacturers, nor in the ſmalleſt degree tend to draw the trade, now illicit, to the port of London.

The rate of freight, or 10l. per ton on exports; which they ſay is lower than the rate of Oſtend, certainly is higher than the freight there or any where elſe in Europe. The freight eſtabliſhed by the Dutch, on their regular ſhips, is 6l. per ton.

They take it for granted, in this report, "That the ſeparate fund or caſh of the Company, about 474,094l. which belongs ſolely to them, will remain as their property, and form no part of the preſent arrangement." This by no means appears unreaſonable, provided they were at all reaſonable

 themſelves,

themſelves; but their attention ſeems fixed entirely on all they term their own rights, without a regard to the rights of others. When they anſwer relatively to the claim of Government to the territory, they ſay " The Court are neither ſurpriſed nor alarmed at the ſuggeſtion relative to the claim of the public to the territorial revenues, notwithſtanding the very reſpectable authority of Mr. Dundas; as they are, and always have been, ready to diſcuſs the Company's *ſuperior* and *undoubted* right to thoſe territories, which have been acquired by the exertions, and at the expence, of the Company, authoriſed for that purpoſe in a correct and diſtinct manner, under the moſt ſolemn charters, and ſince maintained through ſucceſſive wars, at the hazard of the whole of their capital: But as the propoſed arrangement, ſanctioned by the opinion of all parties, and of the public, will leave the territory in the hands of the Company, ſubject, as at preſent, to the control of the board of commiſſioners, their rights and privileges will be reſerved to them entire, and thereby any farther diſcuſſion on this

ſubject becomes unneceſſary. In reſpect to the Commutation Act, the Court entertained a doubt whether Mr. Dundas has viewed this ſubject in ſo comprehenſive a manner as he is accuſtomed to view all others." Without entering into the merits or demerits of the claim, it muſt be owned that in this and in other parts of their anſwers, there is a controverſial, tenacious air, which is not calculated to recommend even truth, nor the moſt ſuitable to the character of petitioners.

On the 25th February Mr. Dundas brought his budget before the Houſe, in which was a ſtatement of the Company's affairs, as drawn out by the Court. The eſtimated annual ſurplus of the revenue they rated at - - £ 1,621,050

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|---|---|
| And the amount received in India for ſale of imports, and certificates for officers privilege, at - - - | 350,000 |
| Surplus at the diſpoſal of the Governor-general in council | £ 1,971,050 |

In theſe they certainly did not mean to overvalue any thing. Their ſentiments of revenue would

would be too extenſive a field to enter upon; but as in the ſale of exports there can be no intricacy, we ſhall juſt touch on the loſs they make to ariſe on them. The coſt of goods and ſtores has lately exceeded to India *per annum* £ 400,000

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|---|---|
| And the amount received for certificates, as by appendix to the budget, G, on an average of five years, ending in 1790-1, was - - | 46,140 |

And as, from the preceding ſtatement, they only value the ſale of theſe exports and caſh received for certificates together, at 350,000l. they thus appear to have loſt 100,000l. *per annum* on their exports of 400,000l.: If this was really ſo, how can we account for their wiſhing to continue ſuch a loſing monopoly? One fact we certainly have before us—that from the commencement of their reports, No. 1, 2, and 3, on the export trade, to the end of them, they inſiſt that they have loſt largely every year by the exports, and furniſh a variety of ſtatements to prove it. This is corroborated by the preſent ſtatement

given in by Mr. Dundas in his budget, in which they make their loſs 100,000l. on 400,000l. Now if it be true that the Company loſe 25 *per cent.* upon their exports, whether charging them with commiſſion and intereſt or not, and if private traders loſe, not even, with thoſe expences and inſurance accumulated, more than ten *per cent.* if ſo much; if private adventurers, in ſhort, do not loſe twenty-five *per cent.* which we pronounce to be impoſſible, becauſe with ſuch a loſs the clandeſtine trade muſt long ſince have ceaſed; then we may certainly conclude that there has been miſmanagement in this branch, and that the excluſive trade, in as far as it has been carried on in exports, has been ſeverely prejudicial to the intereſt of the Company.

Mr. Dundas knowing that, if he erred in taking their ſtatement of ſurplus, it would be erring on the ſafe ſide, made his appropriation of the amount only according to their ſtatement, and after providing for the intereſt of their debts, for ten *per cent.* dividend on their capital (as intended to be

increaſed

increaſed to ſix millions), and 500,000l. *per ann.* for the liquidation of the principal of their debt; he then propoſes the reſidue to be given to Government, to the extent of 500,000l. if ſo much remain, and if more, the ſurplus to be lodged with Government, as a ſinking fund for the ſecurity of the proprietors. The operation of his appropriation appears in letter N of the budget.

On the ſixth of March it appears, in the printed paper, No. 2. that the Court petitioned Parliament for a renewal of their excluſive charter, and on the twelfth, that a Committee of Correſpondence had had a conference with Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, of which the committee make a report on the 18th to the Court. The great points which the committee mark to have formed the ſubſtance of this conference appear exactly conſonant to the tenor of the firſt letter of the 16th February, from Mr. Dundas, and are thus noticed by the committee, in page 9, No. 2. "They (the Miniſters) appear to be impreſſed with a deſire of

 extend-

extending the exports and imports *to* and *from* India, including thofe of private trade, by all poffible means.

"That the exports from Europe fhould be combined in a certain degree, more or lefs, with the import of goods from India.

"That meafures fhould be adopted to convert the clandeftine trade into a fair, regular traffic, through the medium of the Company.

"And that the charge of feven *per cent.* which the proprietors of private trade pay to the Company at prefent, fhould be moderated."

The next letter we fhall touch on, as being fingular, is from the Chairman to Mr. Dundas, dated the 21ft March, being the firft letter in No. 3. He is directed, he fays, to fuggeft, that they "neither think it reafonable nor juft to reduce the charge on private trade below five *per cent.*"

In

In the Court's report of the 21ſt July 1791, in which they deeply inveſtigate this ſubject, they make the charges to coſt them two *per cent.* Now Mr. Dundas propoſed to allow them three *per cent.*; but "they think it would be neither reaſonable nor juſt to take leſs than five *per cent.*" for what coſts them two *per cent.*

The Chairman goes on to ſay, "that the Company had propoſed to accept of 22l. freight out and home, to facilitate every reaſonable expectation, not only becauſe it was leſs than it coſt the Company, but alſo becauſe individuals paid more at Oſtend; but if a further ſacrifice was neceſſary, the committee would recommend to take 20l. in peace, but not in the proportion of 5l. out and 15l. home; for, in ſuch caſe, individuals, after paying 5l. out on the Company's ſhips, would bring their returns from India in foreign ſhips, if a cheaper freight ſhould offer, thereby furniſhing ſubſtantial means for extending the clandeſtine trade, which all parties were deſirous to ſuppreſs."

Now

Now in a former part, already mentioned, they ſay that 10l. per ton out is leſs than is paid at Oſtend on exports (of the value probably of 50l. or 60l.); then from whence draw they a concluſion, that theſe ſhips would bring goods home, valuing from 500l. to 600l. per ton, at a leſs freight than 15l. ? Beſides, did they not know that there was a difference of one *per cent.* in the inſurance, equal of courſe to 5l. or 6l. per ton, after allowing for which, they muſt know that 10l. on a foreign ſhip coſt a merchant equal to 15l. upon a Company's ſhip ?

When we weigh this with the thorough inveſtigation made in the Court's report of 21ſt of July 1791, and in a former report equally well drawn up on freight of privileged goods, where they determine " that the freight paid by the Company on all their piece goods amounted to 51l. per ton, it is not eaſy to ſuggeſt why they ſhould apprehend that foreign ſhips would bring ſimilar goods under 15l. per ton.

On the 22d, Mr. Dundas encloſed to the Chairman ſuggeſtions on the ſubject of the clandeſtine

trade,

trade, in which a claufe was inferted, propofing to remove certain reftrictions in the act of 1781, which did not anfwer the defign of prevention, but became the occafion of immoral deviations and of difregard to the laws.

To referve to the Company the exclufive right of exporting marine ftores (which was among the fuggeftions), as mafts, fpars, cordage, anchors, pitch, tar, and alfo the right of exporting copper, was going a great way indeed to indulge them; for this gave them the exclufive fupply of that which they never had yet fupplied India with, and moft probably never would. Of two thoufand tons *per annum* of the article of marine ftores alone confumed by the country fhips in India, the Company, on inveftigation in 1791, had never fupplied two hundred tons: Indeed, fo far from it, that their own marine was in a great degree fupplied by clandeftine traders.

We then come to a Memoril which, on the 25th of March, the Chairman ufhered into the Committee of correfpondence from gentlemen, who, he faid, fubfcribed themfelves, "A Com-

mittee appointed by ſeveral mercantile houſes, acting as agents for the Eaſt-Indies." The official letter which accompanies it from the committee, conſiſting of three of the moſt reſpectable houſes in London, *viz.* Meſſrs. Muilman and Co. Boehm and Co. and Raikes and Co. does not appear, nor indeed, was it brought forward afterwards in the general court. Why this ſort of myſtery ſhould be obſerved with an official letter, which ought to be as public as the day, is unaccountable. The firſt remark the committee make is, " that the Memorialiſts *avow themſelves* to have ſet the laws of this country at defiance, and to have been agents in carrying on an illicit trade; although, in the ſeventh paragraph of their reaſons in ſupport of their Memorial, they very pathetically reprobate a diſregard to the laws of this country, as a practice that has a degrading effect upon thoſe who embark in it."

Now, very unfortunately for the Committee of Correſpondence, this Memorial is afterwards printed by order of the Court of Directors, and *there is not one word in it tending to ſuch an avowal.* In the anſwer of the Committee of Correſpondence,

dence, they appear in like manner to miſapprehend the Memorialiſts meaning almoſt throughout, nor do they ſeem, in any one part of it, to invalidate a ſingle argument advanced.

The Memorial in fact has much the ſame tendency as the other petitions, which appear from different public bodies, for giving more facility to the commerce between Britain and India, and only differs in the following points:—As large proprietors, the Memorialiſts are attached to the Company's real intereſt, which intereſt, from the ſubſtance of the Memorial, they ſeem to have ſtudied with ſucceſs: In conſequence of this, it appears to be their wiſh that the Company ſhould remain in poſſeſſion of every excluſive privilege which can be uſeful to them, and not detrimental to the ſtate.

Their principal aim avowedly is, and really appears to be, "to annihilate completely the clandeſtine trade, and bring an equal trade in a legal way into the Thames;" and they certainly

 do

do point out the moſt effectual means for theſe ends.

An impartial reader of that Memorial, and of the Court's anſwer to it, who was a complete judge of the ſubject, would moſt probably view the Memorialiſts as the greateſt enemies the clandeſtine trade could have, and the Court of Directors the ſteady, though perhaps unintentional, ſupporters of it.

The Memorialiſts have the advantage of cool diſpaſſionate reaſoning alſo; whereas the Court, from their firſt ſetting off, ſeem to be very intemperate, as if they were attacked in their juſt rights by a ſet of ſmugglers.

As the writers have given a ſort of explanation of their Memorial, in conſequence of the Court's miſapprehenſion, we need ſay no more on the ſubject, as it will, no doubt, be publiſhed by the Court, and ſo ſpeak for itſelf.

There are certain principles in commerce which are ſo well known, and which repeatedly appear in theſe papers, that it would be ſuperfluous to mention them here, were it not that the Court has entirely overlooked them, and has objected ſo ſtrongly to giving the great mercantile intereſt of Britain the freedom required for it, which has appeared to be the only object that Adminiſtration could not give up.

One of theſe principles is, "That, provided the ſame quantity of India goods muſt be imported annually into Europe (and this the Company cannot prevent), the greater the quantity and the greater the variety which can be brought to any one port, the ſales not only of theſe India goods at ſuch port muſt be proportionally higher than at any other port, but the demand alſo of all other goods muſt likewiſe increaſe; for the increaſed number of purchaſers, which ſuch a variety of India goods muſt bring, cannot confine their purchaſes to any one ſort of goods."

Another poſition is, "That no mercantile body trading on their own capital, and paying intereſt and inſurance, can rival a ſimilar body trading upon a capital on which they neither have to pay intereſt nor inſurance, provided the management is equally good."

We would apply this fairly to the ſtate and circumſtances of the Company, without ſtraining it beyond its proper import. We admit that private traders may enhance the prices of India commodities at the original markets; but they cannot poſſeſs themſelves of the Company's aurung eſtabliſhmens, nor of a gratuitous capital. If they injure the Company, they muſt injure themſelves more; they cannot maintain a competition againſt them; the territorial revenues muſt weigh down all oppoſition, and the ſources of theſe are fed afreſh by every enhancement of the prices of thoſe commodities which the territories furniſh. We do not wiſh that any diſturbance ſhould be given to the Company's purchaſes abroad; means, we think, may be taken to obviate that conſequence; but it is

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eaſy to ſee that, in the affair of competition, the Company are not only incomparably the ſtronger party for carrying it on, but the party that will gain *as ſovereigns*, by their own loſs and the loſs of others *as merchants*. No alarming apprehenſion, therefore, ought to be entertained from this quarter.

Having ſtated the ſubſtance of what paſſed in negotiation reſpecting the clandeſtine trade, and entered into ſome diſcuſſion of the merits of that queſtion, we are next led to the claim advanced by the Britiſh manufacturers, "that the wear of Indian muſlins and callicoes ſhould be prohibited in this country;" and this ſubject, though in our humble opinion important, lies in a ſmall compaſs. The Court of Directors, in their minute of the 25th of March, had actually conceded this point to the manufacturers: The miniſter, however, apparently aware of its conſequence to different intereſts, was not ſo ready to yield it, had expreſly left it open in his letter of the 26th of March; and the general Court of Proprietors which met on the 28th, alarmed at the aſpect it

had on their affairs, refifted it with far more earneftnefs than they have fhewn in the queftion of the clandeftine trade. How does Mr. Dundas then ftand at prefent with refpect to it? In the very letter which conveyed the propofed prohibition, he fays, "I am aware that matter will, at the inftance of thofe immediately interefted, undergo a farther confideration; *and as I am perfectly perfuaded, on the moft mature confideration I can give to the fubject, that thofe who urge the requeft are acting in too narrow a view of it, I think it highly probable that part of the queftion may admit a revifion, with the acquiefcence of the gentlemen who have preffed it upon us.*" Is any thing more wanting to explain the ftate of this affair? Are many words neceffary to fhew that in fact there is no conteft here, that the Minifter is with the Court of Proprietors, and that, having already declared themfelves upon it, they will in the iffue receive due fatisfaction concerning it? Let us beware therefore of aggravating our differences into a mafs, by throwing among them things that in fact conftitute no part of them. Of

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this defcription is the prefent fubject, and the proprietors have reafon to congratulate themfelves, that it is not in reality a matter of ferious contention.

There are three other points relative to trade in difpute between the Court and Mr. Dundas. Thefe are, firft, Whether the freight of privileged goods fent by individuals on the Company's fhips, agreed to be in all 20l. per ton, fhall be charged in the proportion of 5l. on the *outward* bound goods, and 15l. on the *homeward* bound, as he thinks would be beft; or in the proportion of 8l. outward, and 12l. homeward, as they require? Secondly, Whether the Company's charges on thofe goods fhall be three *per cent.* as he propofes, or five *per cent.* which the Chairman contended for? And, laftly, Whether, among the merchandize fo privileged by the Company with tonnage in their fhips, *piece goods from India* fhall be included?

Now, it may be very well to pay a juft attention even to minute things; but fhall fuch

trivial points as these be the occasion of serious disagreement, and frustrate or obstruct a negotiation, which involves the fate of the first commercial body in the world, and most materially the welfare of this nation and of all Indostan? It is astonishing that any colour should be afforded for making this a question. In reality the Directors appear to be arguing against the interest of the Company, since the probability of a continued large importation from India to England is far greater than the probability of a continued large exportation *to* India. But what, if it should prove otherwise? and the Company should have 3l. per ton less than they require on outward bound goods, counterbalanced by 3l. more than they require on the homeward bound?—What if (contrary to probability) something should be lost by this arrangement, would it not be better to submit to the loss, than to put off the settlement of the charter and the parliamentary confirmation of our expected ten *per cent.* another year, and perhaps for ever? Is it for such points as these that we are to quarrel with an Administration

miniſtration which laid ſo liberal a baſis of negotiation? As to the *charges* on privileged goods, it need only be ſaid, that the Court, in contending for 5 *per cent.* are confeſſedly contending for a profit; and the deſign of the miniſter is, by holding forth all practicable inducements to the Britiſh reſidents in India, to deſtroy the clandeſtine trade, and bring their conſignments to this country.

With reſpect to the third article, the excluſion of piece goods from the merchandize which individuals ſhall be permitted to ſend home, it may ſuffice to ſay, *that this is a new requiſition* on the part of the Directors. For the ſeven laſt years, this permiſſion has been conſtantly accorded when the Company had any freight to ſpare; *and if the great Indian ſtaple of piece goods is to be excluded from the private imports into Britain; what is this, in other words, but ſtill upholding the clandeſtine trade?* If that article is not allowed to come to England, it will go, as it has too much done for a number of years paſt, to all the ports of the continent;

and the other meaſures now brought forward for aboliſhing illicit traffic will be fruſtrated. It muſt be once more repeated, that the conſumption and demand of Europe for India commodities will not be leſſened by any reſtraints we lay on *our* importations, and it is moſt of all needful, when we propoſe to encourage an increaſed exportation from this country, that we ſhould enlarge the means of return in proportion. To increaſe our exports by means of individuals, and, at the ſame time, narrow the former channel of private importation from India, what is it but an effectual contrivance to throw more than ever of the valuable trade in piece goods into foreign and irregular channels? The Directors ſay, that "if the piece good trade is opened, it will be impoſſible to gueſs how far ſpeculation may go, in extending it to very ruinous lengths," ſo as (according to their ſubſequent expreſſion) to "render it impoſſible for the Company to liquidate their political debts, ſtill leſs to furniſh the propoſed participation to the public." But *is not* the piece

 good

good trade *now open?*—Has it not been open theſe ſeven years? If any thing new were propoſed, a fear of ſpeculation might indeed be pleaded; but this is an old buſineſs, a thing already practiſed; and has it hurt the Company's ſales? Do they find a progreſſive decreaſe, or a progreſſive increaſe, in the profits of their piece goods for ſome years paſt? Beſides, will private ſpeculations, that are unprofitable, long continue? And if they prove advantageous, will not the Company alſo gain? And what, after the utmoſt efforts that can be uſed, are the whole of the profits on the Company's piece goods, that any poſſible variation in that article ſhould materially affect the reſources of the Company, or the participation founded upon it; which, after all, is to fail firſt, with reſpect to the *ſhare of government only*, if it fails at all? We earneſtly deprecate, therefore, *this new meaſure of reſtriction*, well intended, we ſhall readily admit, but very unhappily conceived for the intereſts which all parties wiſh to promote.

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One more point remains to be noticed, which turns rather upon the conſtruction of what has already paſſed, than upon an original difference in principle. It was underſtood that, out of the 1,200,000l. calculated to be the annual ſurplus of the Company's affairs, an increaſe in the dividend of two *per cent.*, making in all ten *per cent.*, ſhould be allowed to the proprietors; 500,000l. more paid in liquidation of debt, and 500,000l. more, or any ſurplus that remained, not exceeding that ſum, to Government.

The reſolution propoſed by Mr. Dundas touching this article, bears, that, if the profits of the Company in any one year ſhall not ſuffice for the payment of 500,000l. to Government, the deficiency ſhall be made good from the ſurplus that may remain in any other year, after providing for the payment of dividend and of debt as above mentioned. The Court obſerve hereupon, "that to make good this ſum at all events, and create any deficiency as a debt, may be ruinous to the Company, and goes beyond any fair expectation of

of the public, which ought not to exceed the Company's annual ability."

Now, the Adminiftration and the Company both agree, that if, after the other fpecified provifions, the Company's furplus can afford 500,000l. annually to the public, the public fhall have it. Then if the Company, after furnifhing the other allotted payments, have in one year a furplus of only 300,000l., and, in the next, a furplus of 700,000l., is it to be underftood that, in thefe two years, Government fhall receive only 800,000l. although, in fact, the Company have a furplus of 1,000,000l.? Would this fairly and fubftantially fulfil the fenfe of the firft agreement between Adminiftration and the Directors? And in what manner are we to underftand that the claim of Adminiftration *turns deficiency into a debt?* Is it a debt upon the general property of the Company, or a debt only upon a certain contingent furplus? The laft merely, and the debt is no otherwife claimable than on the condition that the Company do actually realife fuch a furplus.

We ſee, therefore, no poſſibility of this claim's becoming "ruinous to the Company," ſince it is founded ſolely upon a computation of profit; and the failure of this computation is a diſcharge to the Company *.

After reviewing, then, every point of any importance, which has been the occaſion of diſputation between Adminiſtration and the Court of Directors, we ſee none reſolvable into a ſettled

* Indeed, when it is well conſidered that any participation by Government is wholly ſuſpended on a contingent fund, whence alſo other large allotments are firſt to be ſatisfied, it muſt be allowed that this gives the nation an additional claim to the entire ſum ſtipulated for it, if that fund can make it good.

The liberality of Adminiſtration alſo appears in the diſpoſal of the ſurplus remaining after the appropriations already mentioned, and after the Company's debts are reduced to 3,000,000l. in India, and the bond debt at home to 1,500,000l. viz. one ſixth of the ſurplus they propoſe to go in increaſe to the dividend on the Company's ſtock, and the other five-ſixths, though to go to Government, *are yet to reſt with them as a collateral ſecurity for the Company's ſtock and their dividends.*

difference

difference of opinion, except thofe which relate to the private and clandeftine trades; and even with refpect to thefe, only the articles which are trifling, fuch as the allotment of the agreed rate of freight, and the difference of two *per cent.* in the charges, remain matters of conteft; for, with regard to the more important queftions of bringing the trade, now clandeftine, to the port of London, all parties declare for it: And, with regard to the only other queftion remaining upon this fubject, whether Britifh refidents in India fhall be permitted to receive commiffions from foreigners, the Committee of Correfpondence have given an opinion upon it, which, in our humble conception, may ferve as the bafis of regulation refpecting this matter: " The Committee are perfuaded, under the circumftances they have ftated, that any permiffion to be extended to foreigners, or their trade, will be confined to India: That no perfon fhall be permitted to act as an agent to foreigners, or others, who is not under covenants to the Company, and under the entire control and authority of the governments in

 India:

India: That no Britiſh agent ſhall be ſuffered to lend, on advance, money for the benefit of foreigners in trade; nor to trade themſelves to any place whatſoever on this ſide the Cape of Good Hope, except to Great Britain: And, finally, that ſuch agents ſhall not be permitted to interfere at the Aurungs in the purchaſe of piece-goods."

It appears extremely proper that the Company's power of licenſing and controlling all Britiſh ſubjects in their territorial poſſeſſions ſhould be continued; and that all exiſting acts and regulations, *legiſlative or local*, touching the reſidence of ſuch ſubjects, and the mode of conducting manufacturing and aurung buſineſs in the country, ſhould remain in force.

Here likewiſe, therefore, there is, in fact, nothing eſſential to adjuſt; and it appears aſtoniſhing that a matter of ſuch little real importance as the propoſed alteration in the act of 21 George III. reſpecting intercourſe with foreigners, ſhould have



become

become the oſtenſible cauſe of alienation between his Majeſty's Miniſters and the repreſentatives of the Company. That act had its origin on the laſt renewal of the charter in 1781. It was apparently intended to prevent the aſſiſtance of Britiſh ſubjects from extending, in any poſſible way, to the trade of European foreigners in India or Europe. It is univerſally notorious that the act has not anſwered its end. Some, indeed, have reſpected the authority, though they ſaw the impolicy, of of the law. The ſervants of the Company, more eſpecially thoſe diſtinguiſhed by their character or truſt, have moreover been actuated by a ſenſe of honour in reſpect to themſelves and to their employers. But they were the very perſons in whom a power of dealing with foreigners could moſt ſafely have been veſted, becauſe ſuperior ties of intereſt, reputation, and attachment, would ſtill have maintained in their minds a due regard to thoſe intereſts of the Company, to prevent the apprehended ſacrifice of which, the reſtrictions in queſtion were framed. Others, either not under the ſame covenants, or not entirely under the ſame influences, have always been found to act as the agents of foreigners,

reigners, and the clandeftine trade has greatly increafed fince the act was paffed. Foreigners find no difficulties; the act is daily trampled upon, and the confcioufnefs of tranfgreffing, in one inftance, the example exhibited to the world, of tranfgreffing with impunity, tends to diffufe a fpirit of irregularity and licenfe unfavourable to morals and to fociety.——Now what can be more natural and proper than to advert to this ftate of things upon the formation of a new charter? Would it have been right to have paffed over without regard an inveterate diforder, growing with time ftill more inveterate? If the law is good, and if it can be rendered effective, let it by all means be enforced. The policy of the law has been ftrongly denied by perfons who ought to be competent judges; but all agree that, after an experience of twelve years, it proves ineffective, nor does any one expect that it will hereafter be better enforced than it has been. Shall it then be continued merely to be flighted, when all hope of its anfwering its profeffed defign is gone, and when it only ferves to injure men's minds? No anfwer to this capital objection

tion has been attempted on the part of the Court of Directors. But if this objection be indeed founded, what are they contending for in their violent resistance to the repeal of this law? Are they combating against a *new evil*, which only the abrogation of this law will introduce; or are they stickling about the dead letter of a statute, conscious that the reality of the evil already exists, and that this statute is efficacious to no end but those detrimental consequences already stated? If this be so, ought it not to be done away, and other means used to accomplish its design? These means are indeed already agreed upon in the scheme of bringing the trade, now clandestine, to the port of London: Surely, therefore, the point here in question is not a cause for which the Company would chuse to hazard, or to postpone the renewal of their charter, with all the benefits suspended upon it. And as in fact there appears to be no solid obstacle to the prosecution of the negotiation, let us hope that it will go on without further delay, and soon be happily terminated.

# APPENDIX.

## EXPORTS *from* EUROPE *to* INDIA.

THE Exports of Europe to India are annually about 37,454 tons, and may be claſſed under the following heads:

First: *Foreign Companies*, viz.

| | |
|---|---|
| Dutch, French, Daniſh, Portugueſe, regular ſhips, - - - - | 18,048 tons |
| Second: *Clandeſtine Trade.* | |
| Engliſh commerce carried on under foreign flags, - - - - | 10,255 |
| Third: *Private Trade.* | |
| In Engliſh Company's ſhips, carried by commanders and officers licenſed and unlicenſed, on an average of ten years to 1790, - - - - | 4,258 |
| Fourth: *Engliſh Company's.* | |
| On an average of the laſt ſix years, ending in 1790; during which period their exports have been increaſed beyond that of any former period: | |
| Goods for ſale, 2748 | |
| Stores, - - 2145 | |
| | 4,893 |
| Annual European Exports to India, | 37,454 tons. |

THE END.